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# The Military Atmosphere of the Soviet Army

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THE MILITARY ATMOSPHERE  
OF THE  
SOVIET ARMY

By  
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Thesis Submitted to  
The Faculty of Butler University  
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## PREFACE

As a professional soldier, the writer has long been aware of his lack of knowledge of the Soviet Army, and the general lack of knowledge among the junior officers and enlisted men, of his professional acquaintance. There are available a number of books and manuals, many of them classified, on the tactics, techniques, and weapons of the Soviet Army. However, very little information is available on the daily routine and environment of the officers and men. For these reasons the writer chose this topic, and hopes therein to not only increase his professional knowledge but also the knowledge of his contemporaries.

The writer is greatly indebted to the following for their generous help and cooperation in making this paper possible: Doctor M. Ginsburg, Head of the Department of Slavic Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; Mr. Walter F. Cronin, Chief, Private Branch, External Research Staff, Office of Intelligence Research and Analysis, Department of State, Washington, D.C.; Mr. F.E. Fitzgerald, Director of the Library, The National War College Washington, D.C.; Mrs. Arline Paul, Head, Reference Department, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, California; Mr. Richard Myer, Administrative Assistant, The Russian Institute, Columbia University, New York, New York;



Eileen A. Conley, Head of the Reference Department, The University Library, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana; Mr. Wladimir S. Merzalow, Director, Institute For the Study of the USSR, Munich, Germany. Of particular assistance was Doctor George M. Waller, Head of the Department of History and Political Science, Butler University, for his suggestions and guidance in the preparation of this paper, and Mrs Esther J. Cejnar, Librarian, Butler University, who secured by interlibrary loan many of the publications used in this paper and many others reviewed, but not used.

## INTRODUCTION

In examining the military atmosphere of the Soviet Army the author will attempt to get the feeling of the life of the junior officers and enlisted men. The topics covered will include training, army regulations, military law, Party influence and control within the army, career potential, pay, retirement, daily routine, promotions, induction, terms of service, medical facilities, Post Exchanges, and professional schooling available to officers and men, only to list a few. No work will be done on tactics, techniques, or weapons of the Soviet Army.

Each one of the chapters in this paper could well be the title of a separate work, however in itself it would not give a picture, or the feeling of life in the Soviet Army, which the author has set out to capture.

The location of the material used in this paper is found in the Bibliography. The Library of Congress has many volumes on the Soviet Army and Red Army<sup>1</sup>, however they are practically all in Russian, and the author unfortunately can neither read nor write the Russian language. This handicap did not alter the need for work in this field, and in spite of it, the writer,

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1. The Russian Communist Party war machine was known as the 'Red Army' from its start to the end of World War II, at which time its name was changed to 'Soviet Army', by which name it is known today.

after approximately one year of research, felt he had sufficient information to adequately cover the topic. Some of the information used is approximately eight years old, for example, the fact that sergeants and lower ranking men are permitted no leave. It is readily acknowledged that this may not be true today, but this fact will still contribute to the overall picture, and since it was true eight years ago, the fact that it is not necessarily true today will not materially effect the overall impression of the Soviet Army. The military atmosphere of the Soviet Army cannot be greatly changed. Because of its existence, strength, and position in the Soviet way of life it must be controlled and dominated by the Communist Party. Were the Soviet leaders to relax their control over the officers and men, and army affairs, they might wake up some morning en route to Siberia, policed by the Soviet Army. No one is more aware of this than the Kremlin leaders, as we shall soon see.

Because of the great confusion which would arise if the writer was to use the English translation of the Russian rank titles their American Army counterparts will be used. However, there is no American equivalent of the Russian Marshalls, therefore there is no problem in this instance. The enlisted ranks contain but six grades and will be called: Private, Private First Class, Corporal, Sergeant, Sergeant



First Class, and Master Sergeant.<sup>2</sup> The three grades of Lieutenants will be designated Second Lieutenant, First Lieutenant, and Senior First Lieutenant.<sup>3</sup> All others will be called by their American counterpart. For the record the four grades of Russian General officers are: Major General, Lieutenant General, Colonel General, and General of the Army.<sup>4</sup>

Those aspects of Soviet military life which give background and place the Army in its proper perspective will be investigated initially. From this point we will proceed to certain points which for the most part cut across rank and other artificial barriers. Party supervision will then be discussed so one will be examining the subsequent information in its proper perspective. Soviet military laws and regulations will be briefly reviewed to round out the restrictive and regulatory aspects of the Soviet Army. The training and professional schooling of the private, noncommissioned officer and commissioned officer will be examined, as will be those elements of Soviet life peculiar to the officer corps and the enlisted men. A brief summary of the military atmosphere of

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2. U.S. Department of the Army, Handbook on the Soviet and Satellite Armies, Part I, The Soviet Army. Pamphlet No. 30-50-1, March, 1953, plate 43.

3. Ibid.

4. Edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 7 May, 1940. (Vedomosti, 1940, No. 5). Cited in Harold J. Berman and Miroslav Kerner (ed. and Trans.), Documents on Soviet Military Law and Administration (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 43.

the Soviet Army will conclude the paper.

## I. CERTAIN ASPECTS OF SOVIET MILITARY LIFE

All male citizens of the USSR, without distinction of race, nationality, religious profession, educational qualifications, or social origin and position, shall be obligated to render military service in the ranks of the Armed Forces of the USSR.<sup>1</sup>

Thus is set forth the obligation of all Soviet male citizens to serve in the armed forces of their country. This obligatory term of service varies with rank and branch. Privates of ground units of the army serve for two years, non-commissioned officers of army ground units for three years, all enlisted ranks serve four years in the air forces of the army and navy, and five years in the units and ships of the navy.<sup>2</sup> When required, however, the Soviets do not hesitate to extend the term of service.<sup>3</sup> The age limits for compulsory military training range from age sixteen through fifty.<sup>4</sup> As covered elsewhere in this paper, the training for the

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1. Law of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Article 3, 1 September, 1939 (Vedomosti, 1939, No. 32), as amended in 1941. Cited in Harold J. Berman and Miroslav Kerner (ed. and trans.), Documents on Soviet Military Law and Administration (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 21.

2. Ibid., Article 7.

3. "Mobilization and Demobilization", Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR, September, 1955., p. 42, Cited hereafter as Bulletin.

4. Decree of the State Committee on Defense, 18 September, 1941, (Pravda, 18 September, 1941, No. 259), cited in Berman, p. 37.



youngest group consists of "preinduction" training, those called for their compulsory term of service are normally age eighteen to nineteen.<sup>5</sup> Approximately 1,000,000 men are drafted annually.<sup>6</sup>

Deferments from conscription are granted in certain instances, a physical problem may class one as fit for non-combat service in wartime, in which case the individual is put into the reserve, or a disqualification will cause an individual to be declared unfit for military service and excluded from the military roles.<sup>7</sup> Deferments are granted where an individual is the sole worker in the family and supporting his two incapacitated parents. Individuals in this category are placed in the reserve during peacetime.<sup>8</sup> Educational deferments are granted to persons, under twenty one years of age, in secondary schools.<sup>9</sup> Persons who have lost their electoral rights by court decision, those arrested, exiled, and deported are not inducted into the army while serving their sentence.<sup>10</sup>

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5. U.S. Department of the Army, Handbook on the Soviet and Satellite Armies, Part I, The Soviet Army, Pamphlet No. 30-50-1, March, 1953, p. 71. Cited hereafter as Handbook.

6. Ibid.

7. Law of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Article 24, cited in Berman, p. 26.

8. Ibid., Articles 26-27, pp. 26-27.

9. Ibid., Article 29, p. 27.

10. Ibid., Article 30.

The Reserve of the Soviet Armed Forces is divided into two categories; the first category are those servicemen who have completed their term of active service, the second category are those who have received family-dependency exemptions, those declared fit for noncombat service in wartime, and those inductees who may be declared in excess after the full numerical strength of the army and navy is reached.<sup>11</sup> The first and second categories are divided into three classes, according to age groups:

First Class - up to thirty-five years of age;  
 Second Class - up to forty-five years of age;  
 Third Class - up to fifty years of age.<sup>12</sup>

Reserve training obligations by class and category are as follows:<sup>13</sup>

<u>Class</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Obligation</u>
1	1	Private	2 months training up to 6 times
		Noncommissioned officer	3 months training up to 6 times
1	2	All enlisted ranks	2 months training up to 9 times
2	1 and 2	All enlisted ranks	1 month training up to 5 times
3	1 and 2	All enlisted ranks	1 month training

11. Ibid., Article 31, p. 28.

12. Ibid., Article 32.

13. Ibid., Articles 33-34-36-37, pp. 28-29.

In addition to training periods reservists can be ordered to duty for testing periods up to ten days.<sup>14</sup>

Officer personnel are regulated in their active duty and reserve status by age limits as follows:<sup>15</sup>

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Active Service</u>	<u>Age Limits</u>		
		<u>Reserve of 1st Class</u>	<u>Reserve of 2nd Class</u>	<u>Reserve of 3rd Class</u>
Second Lieutenants and First Lieutenants	30	40	50	55
Senior First Lieutenants	35	45	55	60
Captains and Majors	40	50	55	60
Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels	45	50	55	60
Brigade Commanders (Brigadier Generals)	55	60	..	65
Division Commanders (Major Generals), and higher	60	60	..	65

Officers reaching the maximum age for being in the reserve shall be retired.<sup>16</sup>

Officers reserve obligations by class are as follows:<sup>17</sup>

- 1st Class - May be called every year for a period up to three months;
- 2nd Class - Shall be called for two periods, not longer than three months each;
- 3rd Class - Shall be called for one two month period.

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14. Ibid., Article 38, p. 30.

15. Ibid., Article 41.

16. Ibid., Article 43, p. 31.

17. Ibid., Article 44.



Thirty-six months has been established as the maximum term of training for an officer during his entire time in the reserve.<sup>18</sup>

Women with certain technical qualifications, the medical field being one, are also subject to call.<sup>19</sup>

The mechanics of induction are much like those in America, in that one registers with his local board and is ordered to active duty by it.

As in the United States, the Department, or ministry of Defense administers the Armed Forces. The Army is the senior and predominant force, with the tactical air arm, (67% of the aircraft in the Soviet Air Force), being named the Air Force of the Soviet Army. Strategic air operations is a semi-autonomous organization under direct Ministry control. The Navy is operated and controlled by the Ministry of Defense also.<sup>20</sup> Armed Forces Day is celebrated annually on 23 February,<sup>21</sup> marking the founding of the Red Army in 1918.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to the Armed Forces Day celebration the

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18. Ibid.

19. Handbook, p. 71.

20. Ibid., p. 1.

21. "Soviet Armed Forces Day," Bulletin, March 1955, p. 40.

22. Leonard Schapiro, "The Birth of the Red Army", The Red Army, ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), p. 27.

Soviets also officially honor the other branches and certain arms of their military forces. The AirForce is honored annually, normally in July.<sup>23</sup> Navy Day is another annual event.<sup>24</sup> The President of the Supreme Soviet, in July 1946, decreed that "Soviet Tankman's Day" was to be celebrated in September of each year.<sup>25</sup>

Three months after the German attack in June 1941, the Soviets began separating their elite, high quality troops, from the general mass by dividing the armed forces into two categories; the Guards and the rest. This conversion was brought about by designating units which had distinguished themselves in combat as Guards units; regiments, brigades, divisions, corps, and armies, were so honored. By the end of the war up to one fourth of all infantry and air units were Guards, as were one third of the tank and artillery units, and up to one half of the cavalry and mechanized units. In offensive and defensive operations Guards were employed as shock troops.<sup>26</sup> Members of Guards units wear a distinctive medal on the right

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23. "Air Force Day," Bulletin, June 1954, p. 19.

24. N. Galaij, "Soviet Naval Forces," Bulletin, August 1954, p. 3.

25. N. Galaij, "Tank Forces in the Soviet Army," Bulletin, October, 1954, p. 3.

26. N. Galaij, "The Problem of Quality and Quantity in the Soviet Armed Forces," Bulletin, October, 1956, pp. 10-11.



side of their chest, on the upper part of the medal is inscribed "Guard".<sup>27</sup> During wartime the Guards were further rewarded with a higher rate of pay.<sup>28</sup> In the demobilization of the Soviet Army in 1946, and the slight strength reductions since then, units other than Guards have been effected, so that today the percentage of Guards units is higher than during the past war. The high standards of the Guards units have been maintained by sending them only the best officers and enlisted men, thereby cultivating the feeling of belonging to an elite. If war should break out it would be the non-Guards units that would be expanded in the mobilization, therein preserving the high quality of the Guards.<sup>29</sup>

Pay in the Soviet Armed Forces is covered in detail elsewhere, but it is interesting to note that the maximum pay of the senior enlisted rank is ten times that of the recruit. The base pay of a newly commissioned Second Lieutenant commanding an Infantry Platoon is approximately thirty seven times that of a recruit, and the base pay of the recruit's Division Commander is one hundred fifty times that of the

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27. Edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 21 May, 1942, (Vedomosti, 1942, No. 20), cited in Berman, pp. 45-46.

28. Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 229.

29. N. Galaij, "The Problem of Quality and Quantity in the Soviet Armed Forces," Bulletin, October, 1956, p. 13.



recruit.<sup>30</sup> Applying this scale to the United States Armed Forces, the present Commanding General of the First Marine Division would receive a base pay of \$11,800.00 per month, as opposed to his present base pay of \$1,350.00 per month. The present base pay of the Commanding General of the First Marine Division is sixteen times that of his lowest paid private.

Like many other facets of the Soviet Army, the uniforms have undergone a great change since the establishment of the Red Army in 1918. After the Revolution the Red Army abolished distinction of rank in both uniforms and insignia. By World War II however, the traditional uniform variations for various grades had been reestablished. In 1943 new uniform regulations were promulgated, these reintroduced the Tsarist-type standing collar, shoulderboards to denote rank and the uniforms were designed to differentiate between general officers, field and company grade officers, and enlisted men.<sup>31</sup> The present shoulderboard designs and details are found in the illustrations at the end of this chapter.<sup>32</sup>

The abolition of Tsarist orders and medals gave the Soviets an opportunity to establish their own. During World War II the Soviets made extensive use of medals to reward

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30. M. Martens, "Providing for the Soviet Officer," Bulletin, February, 1956, p. 27.

31. Handbook, p. 135.

32. Ibid., Plates 42-43-44.

outstanding performance of duty, and commemorate offensive and defensive operations. Certain awards are restricted to senior officers only, others are awarded to civilians in addition to the military. Regulations require that all awards be worn on the military uniform, during the war Soviet soldiers wore their medals in combat. Metallic devices are not worn on the initial ribbon or medal to denote a subsequent award, rather two or more of the same award are worn side by side. Medals are worn on both right and left side, and some, notably the Marshal's Star, are worn suspended from the neck by a ribbon.<sup>33</sup>

In certain instances the medal is only part of the citation, for example, the Order of the Gold Star confers upon the recipient the title of "Hero of the Soviet Union" and the award of "The Order of Lenin". The recipient of the Gold Star is to have a bust of himself placed in his native village, and two or more awards entitle him to a full length statue. An award of the Order of Glory carries an automatic military promotion. The monetary awards formerly accompanying many decorations has been discontinued because of the great number given out.<sup>34</sup>

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33. Ibid., p. 142.

34. Ibid.



# SOVIET ARMY SHOULDERBOARDS

## GENERAL OFFICERS



Marshal of the  
Soviet Union



Chief Marshal of  
Infantry, etc.



Marshal of  
Infantry, etc.



General



Lt. General



Maj. General



Brig. General



# OFFICERS



Colonel



Lt. Colonel



Major



Captain



Senior 1st. Lieutenant

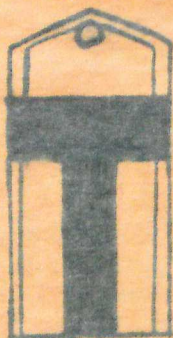


1st Lieutenant

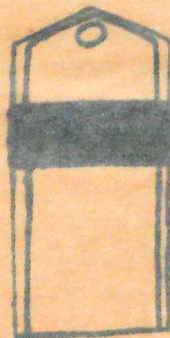


2d Lieutenant

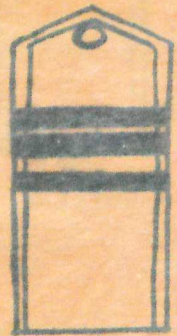
# ENLISTED MEN



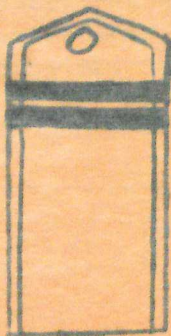
Master Sergeant



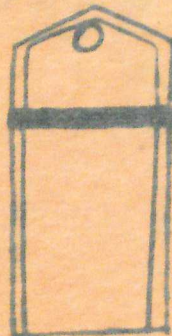
Sergeant First Class



Sergeant



Corporal



Private First Class

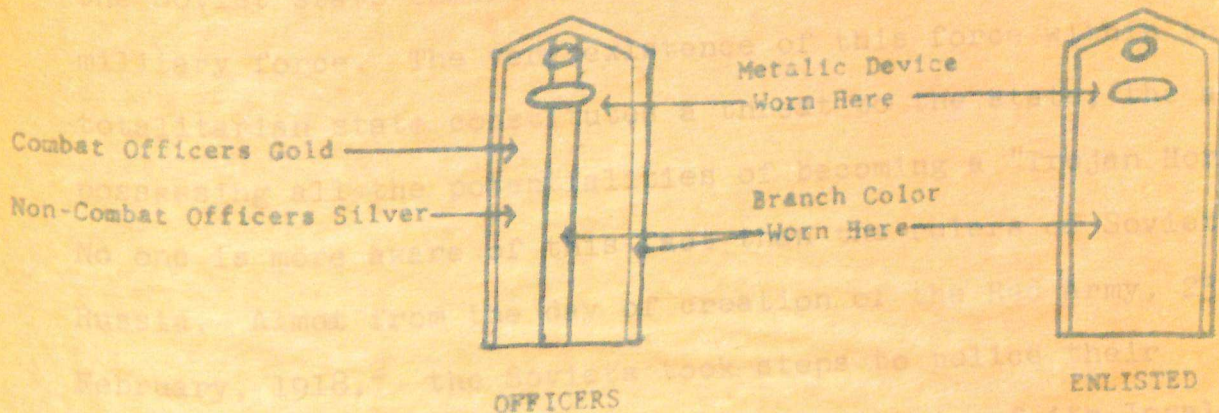


Private

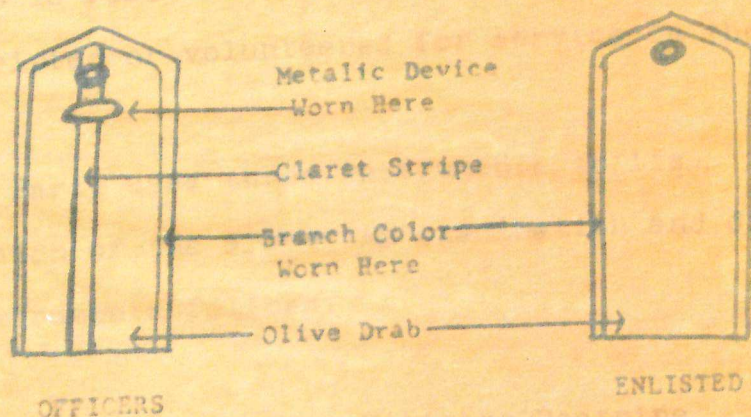


# SHOULDERBOARD DETAILS

## DRESS



## FIELD



GENERAL OFFICERS: Silver Stars are on Gold background

There are twenty different Metallic Devices denoting the various arms or services of the Soviet Army, and each arm or service further has an identifying Branch color.



## II. PARTY SUPERVISION OF THE SOVIET ARMY

In the Soviet acceptance of von Clausewitz' theory that "War is the continuation of politics by other means",<sup>1</sup> we find the Soviet state committed to the maintenance of a large, strong military force. The very existence of this force within the totalitarian state constitutes a threat to the state, the army possessing all the potentialities of becoming a "Trojan Horse". No one is more aware of this fact than the rulers of Soviet Russia. Almost from the day of creation of the Red Army, 23 February, 1918,<sup>2</sup> the Soviets took steps to police their instrument of war and to make absolute certain of its loyalty and allegiance. The magnitude of this initial problem can be readily seen when it is realized that some 48,000 former Tsarist officers were conscripted or volunteered for service in the Red Army.<sup>3</sup>

The Communist Party uses three instruments in its control and supervision of the army. An examination and discussion of these instruments follows.

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1. Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 10.

2. Leonard Schapiro, "The Birth of the Red Army," The Red Army, ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), p. 27.

3. Zbigniew Brzezinski (ed.), Political Controls in the Soviet Army (New York: Russian Research Center, Harvard University, Research Program on the USSR, 1954), p. 3.



## A. The Communist Party

Within the army itself one finds a network of Communist Party organizations. In addition to the regular Party cells there also is found the Komsomol (Young Communist League). These two organizations operate on all echelons of the army and embrace all members of, or candidates for membership in, the Party. Regardless of rank all members are subject to Party discipline and to their own Party officials.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 86% of the leadership of the army belongs to the Communist Party or the Komsomol.<sup>5</sup> Among the enlisted men membership in the Party is quite rare, in some cases but 1%, however membership in the Komsomol may run from 5% in some units<sup>6</sup> to 50% in others.<sup>7</sup>

The main purpose of the Party organizations in the army is to support, supplement and reinforce the operations of the political controls machinery which exists in the army as another separate entity. In all cases the party organization, in its work among the troops is subordinate to, and directed by the

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4. Ibid., p. 14.

5. U.S. Department of the Army Assessment, The Soviet Army, May 15, 1958, p. 1.

6. U.S. Department of State, The Soviet Union as Reported by Former Soviet Citizens, Interview Report No. 4., August 1, 1952, p. 4. Cited hereafter as Report.

7. Ibid., No. 7, June 4, 1953, p. 3.

system of political controls.<sup>8</sup>

## B. Political Controls

The political education of the Soviet soldier is the responsibility of the Chief Political Administration of the Army, and although this administration is in the Ministry of War, it reports directly to the Central Committee of the Communist Party.<sup>9</sup> It is within this framework that we find the well-known military commissar.

The military commissars appointed to the Red Army in the early days of its establishment inaugurated the watchdog policy of the Party leadership. The military commander shared the command of his unit with the commissar. All military orders had to be countersigned by the commissars who could countermand the order and even arrest the commander for counterrevolutionary activities. The resolution of the Fifth Congress of Soviets, 10 July, 1918, stated:

The military commissars are the guardians of the close and inviolable inner bond between the Red Army and the workers' and peasants' regime as a whole. Only irreproachable revolutionaries, staunch champions of the proletariat and the village poor, should be appointed to the posts of military commissars, to whom is

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8. Brzezinski, p. 14.

9. Garthoff, p. 240.



handed over the fate of the Army.<sup>10</sup>

To direct the work of the commissars a Political Administration of the Red Army was established in May 1919, to serve under the Central Committee of the Party as its Military Department.<sup>11</sup> That the system was successful can be seen from the loyalty of the army during the successful prosecution of the civil war. However it should not be assumed that the commissar was a welcome companion to the professional soldier; nothing could be farther from the truth.

At the conclusion of the Civil War the "Army Opposition" at the Tenth Party Congress attempted to have the institution of the commissar abolished, or at least have their powers curtailed. These efforts were not successful. However, in 1924 unity of command was established in the combat, supply, and administrative branches, and in cases where a commander was a trusted party member the functions of commander and commissar were combined. Following the modernization and reorganization of the army in 1935, the decree of 22 September, of that year, establishing personal ranks for the commanders also provided specific ranks for the political personnel. The relationship between the two remained unchanged, with the commander exercising undivided authority

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10. Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies: Verbatim Report, July 4-10, 1918, Moscow, 1918, p. 213. Cited in Brzezinski, pp.3-4.

11. Ibid., p. 4.

in non-political matters.<sup>12</sup>

Following the purges of the Red Army in 1937, the decree of 15 August re-established the equality of the commanding officer and the commissar in both the political and military spheres. Pravda of 8 September, 1938 stated the commissars were the "eyes and ears of the Party and government in the Army". In conjunction with this decree a campaign for vigorous political activity among the troops was launched.<sup>13</sup> When it is realized that three of five Marshals and thirteen of fifteen Army Commanders<sup>14</sup> were victims of the purge it is easy to understand why political activities in the army were accelerated.

The unsatisfactory initial performance of the Red Army in the Finnish campaign of 1939-1940 set the stage for a return to unity of command within the army. On 12 August 1940 the commissar was abolished, and replaced by an Assistant Commander for Political Affairs (zampolit), who was subordinate to the unit commander, in both military and political affairs. Following the disastrous initial phase

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12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

14. Nitzi-Nitzi, Japan, December, 1938; Posev Callendar for 1951; Posev ("Sowing"), Germany, No. 49, December 2, 1950, p. 15; and Beck and Godin (pseud.), Russian Purge and the Extraction of Confession, New York, 1951, p. 106. Cited in Garthoff, p. 220.



of the war with Germany, the commissar was again restored to his original status on 16 July 1941. The defections of a great number of Russian soldiers and units can be cited as the cause for this move. With the improvement of the military situation in 1942 the commissar again went out of existence on 9 October. The zampolit returned in a situation which saw the restoration of unity of command to the military picture. This pattern is essentially in effect today,<sup>15</sup> with the zampolit definitely subordinate to the commander.<sup>16</sup>

The aims and objectives of the political controls in the Soviet Army are designed to:

....strengthen the political morale of the troops and their military discipline; to combat cowards and deserters; to create hatred for the enemy and a desire for his destruction; to prepare the troops to hold fast under any circumstances, contemptuous of death for the sake of victory; to educate the ranks in the spirit of intense political vigilance, thus preventing the penetration of the Soviet Armed Forces by spies and diversionists; to inculcate in the Soviet soldier and officer devotion to their arms - to safeguard them in all situations and not to hand them over to the enemy; to familiarize the enlisted men with the military traditions of the Soviet Army and with the "heroic achievements" of its soldiers, commanders and political workers; to organize mass political agitation and propaganda, political study and leisure, and to supply the units with adequate reading materials; and to analyze the political morale of the forces of the enemy

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15. Brzezinski, pp. 5-6.

16. This is clearly stated in the Ustav Vnutrennei Sluzhby Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR, 1946, p. 29, par. 69, cited in Garthoff, p. 240.

and to attempt to undermine them from within.<sup>17</sup>

To fulfill its mission the Chief Political Administration is a well organized operation. Its organization parallels that of the army, beginning at the Military District level and extending down through Army, Corps, Division, Regiment, and Battalion level. Every commander at these echelons has his Deputy for Political Affairs (zampolit).<sup>18</sup> The zampolit at company level was abolished in 1955.<sup>19</sup> Although the zampolit is subordinate to the commander, he does evaluate the political loyalty of the commander and report on it.<sup>20</sup> The basic political organization in a unit is at the regimental level,<sup>21</sup> the regimental zampolit being assisted by those zampolits in the subordinate units and the members of the Communist Party cells within those units, the leaders of the cells being the "right arm" assistants of the zampolit. Further assistance is also received from the regimental propagandist, who is responsible for the agitation-propaganda work in the regiment.<sup>22</sup> The

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17. Brzezinski, pp. 8-9.

18. Ibid., p. 9.

19. Raymond L. Garthoff, "Army in Being," Army, January 1958, p. 52.

20. Brzezinski, p. 9.

21. J. M. Mackintosh, "The Political Administration," The Red Army, ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), p. 230.

22. Brzezinski, pp. 12-13.



zampolit also keeps a constant watch over the observance of the Code of Military Discipline and reports any breaches of it.<sup>23</sup>

The vehicles for the dissemination of the political information are many. The regimental club with its library attempts to organize the cultural activities of the troops and keep them supplied with books, lectures, and movies.<sup>24</sup> Within the military units political activities are conducted two or three times each week and last about two hours. The participants are divided into five groups: soldiers with under two years service; soldiers over two years service; sergeants; other non-commissioned officers; and officers. The only ones excused are officers who have completed their studies at the evening universities of Marxism-Leninism. The activities normally involve a series of lectures, individual preparations and discussions, the topics being official biographies of Lenin and other Party leaders, political subjects, or "Anglo-American Imperialists" type subjects.<sup>25</sup> Political information talks are conducted three times per week by the company commander to his company. They are generally given in the morning and last about an hour.

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23. "This is the main task of the political organs of the armed forces." Red Star, No. 7065. cited in G. A. Tokaev, Soviet Imperialism (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1956), p. 65.

24. Brzezinski, p. 42.

25. Ibid., p. 42.

These presentations serve to keep the unit in touch with current events. Discussion groups meet daily, ranging in size from two men to the entire company. Topics range from internal life of the unit to international politics. In addition, wall newspapers, posters, movies, and reading rooms promulgate the "party line". According to regulations each company is to receive two copies of Pravda and Izvestiya, five copies of the military newspaper Krasnaya Podgotovka, and ten copies of the training manual Boyevaya Podgotovka (Preparation for Combat).<sup>26</sup>

Soviet reaction to a political situation is graphically demonstrated in an Associated Press story originating in Moscow and appearing in The Indianapolis Star on 23 July 1958, eight days after the landing of United States Marines in Lebanon.

The Soviet Ministry of Defense has launched a nationwide campaign to build up the fighting readiness and spirit of its servicemen in the face of the Mid-east crisis.

Political indoctrination is a main feature of this drive. The army paper Red Star described it in a front page editorial yesterday as "agitational and propaganda work to explain the political meaning" of United States and British troops landing in Lebanon and Jordan. The Soviet press has reported meetings and political rallies throughout the armed forces and particularly in the Trans-Caucasus area bordering on the Mideast.

At these meetings the American and British "imperialists" were condemned.

The meetings are tied in with maneuvers in a show of force along borders of Turkey and Iran.<sup>27</sup>

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26. Ibid., pp. 43-44.

27. The Indianapolis Star, July 23, 1958, p. 4.



The Soviet Army House, which exists in all the major garrison towns, is another center of the political education and cultural leisure of the officers and soldiers, and their families. Here is often found a restaurant and facilities for meetings, concerts, rallies, dances, movies, and reading rooms. In addition there are barber shops, photo studios, gymnasiums, and lounges with comfortable furniture. All this is free for Soviet military personnel.<sup>28</sup>

Once each year all units are visited by a team from the Inspector General's Office. In addition to the military type inspection associated with such visits, the political preparation and political morale of the troops is also evaluated. The results of the inspection are reported to the Defense Minister, and the consequences of an unfavorable political report are felt far and wide.<sup>29</sup>

The reaction of the troops to all this information and education program is an interesting subject. Brzezinski reports its acceptance as a "necessary evil".<sup>30</sup> The troops participate in varying degrees of enthusiasm, however they do feel that it encroaches on what little is left for leisure time, as even the holidays are organized for political

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28. Brzezinski, p. 45.

29. Ibid., pp. 46-47.

30. Ibid., p. 47.



activities, collective sports competition, or meetings.<sup>31</sup>

The relationship between the officers and the zampolits varies also. In some instances the relations are good, often there is existing an "armed truce" type understanding, "you don't tell on me, and I won't tell on you", agreement.<sup>32</sup> Again one finds dislike and animosity between officers and the zampolit,<sup>33</sup> the basic problem probably being personalities. After all, this system has been in effect for so long that with very few exceptions the Soviet officer has known of no other arrangement.

### C. The Secret Police

The final supervision agency of the Communist Party is the Secret Police. To the soldier in the ranks the big difference between the political officer and the police officer is that while he may dislike, despise or tolerate the former, he avoids and fears the latter.<sup>34</sup>

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31. Ibid., p. 48.

32. U.S. Department of State, The Soviet Union as Reported by Former Soviet Citizens, Interview Report No. 19, September, 1957, p. 12., and Interview Report No. 9, 1955, p. 10. Cited hereafter as Report.

33. Ibid., Report No. 6, November 17, 1952, p. 5.

34. Mackintosh, p. 232.

The secret police have been known by many titles, the first being the Cheka, ("Extraordinary Commission for the Suppression of Counter-revolution, Sabotage, and Speculation").<sup>35</sup> Formed in 1918, the Cheka had grown out of Okhrana, the police organ established by Tsar Alexander III in 1881 but abolished in March 1917 by Kerensky's Provisional Government.<sup>36</sup> From 1922 to 1923 the secret police were known as GPU; from 1923 to 1934 as OGPU; from 1934 to 1943 as NKVD; from 1943 to 1946 as the two commissariats NKVD and NKGB; and renamed again, in 1946, to MVD (Minister of Internal Affairs) and MGB (Minister of State Security).<sup>37</sup> In March, 1953 the MGB was merged with the MVD.<sup>38</sup> In 1954 the total strength of the Soviet armed forces was about five million, of which 700,000 to 800,000 were in the MVD.<sup>39</sup> Other estimates run to twenty percent of the officers in a regiment being engaged in activities of the MVD. Membership is supposed to be secret.<sup>40</sup>

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35. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine, p. 243.

36. Major Edward F. Donowitz USMC, "Party Control of the Soviet Army," Marine Corps Gazette, September, 1957, p. 20.

37. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine, p. 243.

38. Ibid., p. 245.

39. N. Galaij, "Military Representation in the Higher Party Echelons," Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR, April 1956, p. 3. Cited hereafter as Bulletin.

40. Report, No. 9, p. 10.



The MVD units in the army are known as the Special Sections, abbreviated to "OO". They are directed by the Main Administration of Counterintelligence (GKU) of the Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., which is a section of the MVD.<sup>41</sup> The primary functions of the MVD within the army is of a punitive nature, designed to discover and destroy all anti-Soviet activities and attitudes among the officers and men. Although the counterintelligence label is placed on their activities it is doubtful that any foreign agents are apprehended in the lower echelons of the army, but there are countless reports of the arrest of officers and men for expressing critical views of the party or system.<sup>42</sup>

A Counterintelligence Administration exists in the Military Districts, and Counterintelligence Sections operate in the echelons of army, corps, division, and independent brigades. At the regimental and battalion levels the work is performed by the MVD officer. The chain of command follows that of the military; battalion to regiment to division, etc.<sup>43</sup>

The MVD officer maintains an elaborate system of spies throughout his unit. In addition to the ordinary soldier he tries specifically to recruit persons in specific jobs: secre-

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41. Brzezinski, p. 55.

42. Ibid., p. 54.

43. Ibid., p. 55.

taries, aides, orderlies, etc. Spies are spied upon, and mutually checking informers are used, therein further adding to the intrigue. The situation is graphically illustrated by a report that of five deserters to the West from an administrative branch of the Soviet Army of Occupation in Germany, four were former MVD officers. Two succeeded, the other two received twenty-five years at hard labor for their efforts.<sup>44</sup>

As far as is known the tactical operations of a unit are outside the jurisdiction of the MVD. The MVD officer, however, keeps close liaison with the zampolit, with an exchange of information within their mutually overlapping fields.<sup>45</sup> The MVD is also responsible for checking on the activities of the political controls and Party within the Army, but they in turn do not have the right or means of checking on the MVD, the only recourse is a complaint through official channels to a higher echelon.<sup>46</sup>

The MVD participates in all the activities of the unit. The MVD officer is responsible for the following:

- a). Participating in all meetings and gatherings of the troops. A unit commander may not refuse to issue an invitation to an OO [MVD] officer representative.
- b). Attending lectures, maneuvers, parades, inspect-

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44. Ibid., pp. 57-58.

45. Ibid., pp. 58--59.

46. Ibid., p. 61.



ions, etc. The OO officer periodically supervise the daily activities of the troops and the officers.

c). Having access to the most secret files of the units.

d). Inspecting, even without the prior authorization of the unit commander, the unit's military supplies and stores, financial accounts, armaments, etc.

e). Organizing and directing a network of agents.<sup>47</sup>

Other activities of the MVD includes investigation of all unusual happenings, deaths, maimings, theft of government property, accidents, suicides, desertions, loss or destruction of arms, and group drunkenness. These investigations are in addition to the military investigations. In case the MVD conclusions, and recommendations are at variance with the military findings the MVD usually prevail.<sup>48</sup>

The MVD also has a hand in the punishment of anti-state activities. The accused is arrested by the MVD, and an administrative verdict is handed out by the MVD without the benefit of the judicial process. The formalization of the case through military channels takes place later.<sup>49</sup>

Two stories clearly illustrate the attitude of the Soviet soldier toward the MVD. The nickname of the MVD was "Farewell, motherland!"<sup>50</sup>, in one unit of the army, and in another the phrase circulating around the camp was: "If you get into the

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47. Ibid., pp. 61-62.

48. Ibid., p. 68.

49. Ibid., p. 69.

50. Report, No. 19, p. 13.

office of the MGB [MVD], whether guilty or not, you will be sentenced to 25 years."<sup>51</sup>

The three facets of control of the Soviet army by the Communist Party have effectively kept the army in its place since its organization in 1918. In spite of the duplication of effort, inefficiency, poor morale, fear, distrust, and a dozen other bad effects from such a system, it has worked, and it has survived such blows as the purge of 1937, World War II, and the dismissal of Marshal Zhukov.

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51. Ibid., No. 7, June 4, 1953, p. 3.



### III. TRAINING

"The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war."

Chinese proverb.

In this chapter we shall examine the training programs and professional schools of the privates, noncommissioned officers, and commissioned officers of the Soviet Army. We will also briefly touch on the facet of initiative, because regardless of how well a leader is trained, if he cannot, will not, or is afraid to use what he has, his training is to a large extent negated.

#### A. Enlisted Training

The training of the Soviet enlisted man can be broken down into a number of categories: preinduction and post-induction, summer and winter. The training program normally covers one year, each arm and service having its own, but all designed to bring the army to its peak combat effectiveness each fall.<sup>1</sup>

Preinduction training is given on the local level to all youths during the final year before induction. The trainees

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1. U. S. Department of the Army, Handbook on the Soviet and Satellite Armies, Part I, The Soviet Army, Pamphlet No. 30-50-1, March, 1953, p. 71. Cited hereafter as Handbook.

wear civilian clothing, provide their own transportation, and receive no special compensation. The training consists of twenty hours of political instruction and one hundred hours of military training. The schedule includes instruction and drill in physical education, chemical warfare, military courtesy, marching, weapons assembly, and marksmanship. A number of training aids are available, one rifle or submachine gun and one practice grenade are available for each fifteen to twenty students. Posters show most other types of equipment with models of light and heavy machine guns also available. Training is conducted by an officer and several noncommissioned officers being ordered to active duty as instructors, from the local reserve unit.<sup>2</sup> Upon release from this program the eager Russian lad can acquire additional military information and skills by joining the DOSARM (Voluntary Society for Assistance to the Army). If the recruit is a high school graduate he has also received several hundred hours of pre-military training.<sup>3</sup>

The training system awaiting the Soviet inductee is one based on combining theory and practical application: instruction and study, drill and practice. War games and

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2. Ibid., p. 72.

3. "The Soviet Soldier and His Leaders," The Soviet Military Organization (New York: Armed Forces Information School, Fort Slocum, 1951), p. 30. Cited hereafter as Organization.



maneuvers play an important part in peacetime training.<sup>4</sup>

Conscripts usually enter the service in October,<sup>5</sup> and commence a two month period of quarantine. The Soviet quarantine camp finds its American counterpart in the draftee reception centers. Here the recruits are given their medical examinations, issued clothing, tested and screened for occupational skills, studied for future assignments, and given additional basic military training. Upon completion of the quarantine period the soldier's oath of allegiance is taken.<sup>6</sup>

I, a citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, entering the ranks of the Armed Forces, take an oath and solemnly swear to be an honorable, brave, disciplined, and alert warrior, strictly to guard military and state secrets, to fulfill without demur all military codes and orders of commanders and superiors.

I swear to study conscientiously the art of war, in every way to safeguard military and national property, and to be dedicated to the last breath to my People, to my Soviet Motherland and to the Soviet Government.

I am always ready at the order of the Soviet Government to come forward to the defense of my Motherland - The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and as a warrior of the Armed Forces, I swear to defend it manfully, ably, with dignity and honor, not sparing

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4. Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), pp. 281-82.

5. Organization, p. 44. Handbook lists a spring draft call, (p. 72), however all other publications read by the author cite fall as the induction period, and this is logical in light of the annual training cycle culminating in the fall.

6. Handbook, p. 72.

my blood and my life itself for achieving full victory over enemies.  
If by evil intent I break this my solemn oath, then may the hard penalty of the Soviet law, and the universal hatred and contempt of the toilers overtake me.<sup>7</sup>

By December the recruits are assigned to regular army units. They normally compromise 25 to 30% of the units strength and are fully integrated with the experienced troops.<sup>8</sup> Technical troops, chemical, engineer, medical, and the like receive some of their specialized training in schools outside their unit.<sup>9</sup>

The Ministry of Defense establishes the training programs of the arms and services of the Soviet Army. The winter and summer periods are divided into two or three stages in which specific themes or objectives are stressed. In some branches the training programs cover more than one year, the Infantry for example is on a two year training cycle. Where the cycle exceeds one year in length each additional annual program is similar to the first although increasingly more complex in specialist and technical training. Where a branch has a two year or longer cycle, it out of necessity has to have two

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7. Edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 3 January 1939 (Vedomosti, 1939, No. 1), in the revised text of 10 June, 1947 (Vedomosti, 1947, No. 20). Cited in Harold J. Berman and Miroslav Kerner (ed. and trans.), Documents on Soviet Military Law and Administration (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 40.

8. Organization, p. 44.

9. Handbook, p. 72.



programs in operation at the same time, one for the new recruit, and the advanced program.<sup>10</sup>

December or January, in addition to marking the beginning of the winter training cycle, also calls for unit reorganizations. The recruits replace those being demobilized. Vehicles undergo extensive inspection and repair, critiques of the fall maneuvers are held and the outstanding personnel are selected for further military schooling and advancement.<sup>11</sup>

The winter training, generally ending in mid-April or May, is conducted in the garrison posts. These posts usually have areas in which small units can maneuver against each other and in which small arms and mortars can be fired. Classrooms, scout areas, and the utilization of the countryside for marches make up the post and its neighborhood. The first stage of winter training emphasizes individual training; customs, courtesies, regulations, familiarization with weapons, individual specialty training and close-order drill.<sup>12</sup> The Soviet Infantry Drill Regulations of 1947 and 1948, are devoted almost exclusively to the individual, squad, and platoon levels and have nothing corresponding to the regulations for battalion and regimental drill parades found in the United States Armed

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10. Ibid., pp. 72-73.

11. Ibid., p. 73.

12. Ibid.

Forces.<sup>13</sup> The second stage concentrates on weapons crew drill and small unit tactics. Snow and ice conditions call for the suspension of the winter program to take advantage of them for cold weather tactical training. Physical conditioning is a daily occurrence.<sup>14</sup>

The summer period commences about May and ends in October. Here we find the practical application of the theoretical training given during the winter. The chief goals of the summer program are to provide tactical training for units of company, battalion and regimental size, and to accustom the troops to living and operating in the field. Division and Army maneuvers are held in September and October, thus rounding out the training cycle.<sup>15</sup> All arms participate in the final exercises; artillery, tanks, rockets, close support aircraft and the other specialist arms.<sup>16</sup>

During the year of training the Soviet soldier has become familiar with his weapons and he knows how to use them. He has been conditioned to operating with live ammunition and his field exercises have been near-combat. He has received detail-

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13. Stroevoi Ustov Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR ("Drill Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR"), Moscow, 1947, 192 pp.; and 1948, 189 pp. Cited in Garthoff p. 247.

14. Handbook, p. 73.

15. Ibid.

16. Organization, p. 44.



instruction in attack, defense and reconnaissance. His field work has included the use of cover, routes of advance, and camouflage.<sup>17</sup> His physical condition is excellent. In addition to regularly scheduled morning calisthenics there are periods allotted to physical conditioning during the day. Forced marches and double timing are used in moving to and from training sites.<sup>18</sup> The mind of the Soviet soldier has also received intensive training, however this topic is covered in Chapter Two.

#### B. Training of the noncommissioned officers

As one studies the Soviet Army one cannot help but soon discover the pendulum-like swing from the absolute controls of the days of the Imperial Army to the almost total lack of normal military controls in the Red Army of the 1920-30 era, and the gradual return to the normally accepted military procedures. Caught in this tide has been the non-commissioned officer. Unfortunately there is not much information available on the lot of this very important part of any military organization. Two United States Army publications lead one to arrive at two somewhat different evaluations

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17. Ibid., p. 45.

18. Handbook, p. 73.

of the Soviet noncommissioned officer.

Both publications agree that the noncommissioned officer schools are conducted by line regiments and divisions, and that a seventh grade education is the minimum, however this is sometimes waived. Courses begin in November or in the spring. The instruction includes political indoctrination, physical education, drill, leadership, military regulations, tactics, communications and weapons. Specialist training is also included where applicable. The courses are of about nine months duration.<sup>19</sup>

One source points out that privates are not eager to become noncommissioned officers because to do so may mean an additional year of service and the privileges gained do not compensate for the increased obligation. This attitude brings about a large involuntary attendance at these schools, an average low intelligence, not always the best qualified men in attendance, and a minimum effort being expended.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand we have:

The typical Soviet noncommissioned officer is a hard, Communist-indoctrinated individual who obeys orders promptly. He has good staying power and morale is usually good.<sup>21</sup>

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19. Handbook, p. 75 and Organization, p. 47.

20. Handbook, p. 75.

21. Organization, p. 47.



A third source concludes:

From numerous observations one is led to the conclusion that the corps of NCOs is made up of excellent men. The trouble, however, is that the NCOs are deprived of opportunities for the proper exercise of their duties as leaders. In a land where everything is centralized and controlled by 'directing organs', life teaches men to act only in accordance with directions from above. A junior commander, like an engineer in a workshop, cannot make any -even the most trivial - decision.<sup>22</sup>

### C. Training of Officers

Shortly after World War II the Soviets, profiting from their experiences of that conflict, inaugurated an intensive school program for their officers at all levels. Officer careers follow a planned rotation between school, troop duty, and staff assignments.<sup>23</sup> Correspondence courses are also available, as are army journals, newspapers, pamphlets, and other military literature.<sup>24</sup> The opportunities for this reading and study are fairly wide as contrasted to the almost complete lack of such opportunities for the enlisted soldier.<sup>25</sup>

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22. Mikhail Koriakov "The Military Atmosphere", The Red Army, ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956) p. 418.

23. Organization, p. 46.

24. Handbook, p. 76.

25. U.S. Department of State, The Soviet Union as Reported by Former Soviet Citizens, Interview Report No. 15, October 1955, p. 16. Cited hereafter as Report.

The first school in the Soviet military educational program is the Suvorov, or military preparatory school. These schools were organized during World War II to provide the future leaders for the Soviet Army. Some twenty one of these schools were known to exist in 1953. Applicants for enrollment must be between the ages of eight and thirteen, the courses run from seven to nine years, depending upon the previous education of the cadet. The original intention when establishing this school was to restrict its cadets to orphans of army World War II heroes, but war orphans, and sons of living army officers are now being accepted. All education, clothing and board requirements while enrolled in the school are provided by the Soviet government. Because there is great competition for assignment to the school, the successful candidates are above average physically and mentally.<sup>26</sup>

The education received in the Suvorov schools is above average. The subjects covered include Russian language and literature, mathematics, history, geography, natural sciences, the Soviet Constitution, one or two foreign languages, art, singing, instrumental music, horsemanship, dancing, and physical education. To this is added the subjects of military history, regulations, drill, small arms firing, tactics, and motor vehicle driving and maintenance. Superimposed on all

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26. Handbook, pp. 75-76.



this is a thorough indoctrination in Communist philosophy and doctrine.<sup>27</sup>

Upon graduating from the Suvorov school those students selecting the army are immediately assigned to an officer candidate school. If a cadet does not choose to enter the army he is permitted to attend a university to prepare for a civilian career, however he enters the army reserve. Those outstanding cadets entering the army are permitted to select their own branch of service.<sup>28</sup>

Officer candidate schools are theoretically open to qualified Soviet citizens, all enlisted military personnel meeting the necessary requirements, and all Suvorov school graduates. Upon examining the requirements it will easily be seen that only a small percent of Soviet citizens are eligible. The physical requirements are high, each candidate must possess absolute political reliability,<sup>29</sup> and meet an educational requirement of seven to ten years of school.<sup>30</sup>

Each arm and service in the Soviet army operates its own officer candidate schools. In contrast to the twenty-two week American Army, or thirty-two week Marine Corps basic

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27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., p. 76.

29. Ibid.

30. Report, No. 7, 4 June, 1953, p. 9.

officer school, the Soviet officer candidate school runs from two to three years, depending on the branch. Graduates from this program are commissioned Second Lieutenants. After a brief leave they are assigned to duty with a tactical unit.<sup>31</sup> The products of this program can be expected to be politically unimpeachable and an adequately trained company officer.<sup>32</sup>

A unique feature of Soviet military system is a fairly early determination whether or not an officer has the potential for becoming a general officer. Those who are felt to possess this potential are selected to attend their branch academies, those who lack this potential are sent to Advance Officer Schools. These schools, in general, offer abbreviated versions of the courses offered by the respective academies. They are specifically designed to train the student for duties on the battalion and regimental levels.<sup>33</sup>

The branch academy, comparable to the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth,<sup>34</sup> is a very important milestone in the career of the Soviet officer. As mentioned, selection for the

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31. Handbook, p. 76.

32. Organization, p. 48.

33. Handbook, p. 76. Colonel Louis B. Ely, The Red Army, states the branch academy trains students to the division level.

34. Garthoff, p. 61.



academy places him in a select group of officers, and the record achieved while at the academy often influences his speed of advancement. Branch academy programs can be completed through extension and correspondence courses, and the graduates of these programs theoretically have the same opportunities for promotion as officers who have actually attended.<sup>35</sup> It is very difficult to enter the academies, there being an elaborate system of recommendations culminating in special examinations given by the academies,<sup>36</sup> in addition to an age requirement of less than thirty-three years. Those officers selected vary in rank from lieutenant to major. Courses range from three to five years, according to the branch of service.<sup>37</sup>

The branch academy for the infantry is known as the Frunze Academy. This school covers the tactics and techniques of the various arms, then the duties of commanders and staffs of corps and higher echelons.<sup>38</sup>

At the apex of Soviet military instruction one finds the Voroshilov Higher Military Academy, this is comparable to the United States National War College.<sup>39</sup> Candidates must be

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35. Handbook, p. 76.

36. Report, No. 1, August 1951, p. 8.

37. Handbook, p. 76.

38. Colonel Lewis B. Ely, "The Officer Corps," The Red Army, ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), p. 396.

39. Organization, p. 48.

graduates of a branch academy, must have had at least two years experience as a staff officer, and rank as a lieutenant colonel, colonel, or brigadier general. The regular course runs three years. There is a special ten month course, designed to improve overall military education, given to general officers only.<sup>40</sup>

Officers of the Army, Navy and Air Force attend the Voroshilov Academy. In addition to imparting knowledge to the high commanders of the Soviet military, the Voroshilov Academy is also a research institute where new military theories and ideas are studied. This work is carried on in cooperation with the Historical Department of the General Staff. Most of those working for this department are also instructors in the Voroshilov Academy.<sup>41</sup>

I feel that even the most severe critic of the Soviet Army would be forced to admit that its education and training program, if properly administered and implemented, would have to be rated as excellent. To what degree it is being administered and implemented only time and the battlefield will tell. But as long as the capability exists, we must, until it is proven otherwise, rate it excellent. Regardless of how good any training and education system is, and I have just rated

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40. Handbook, p. 76.

41. Bulletin of the Institute For the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR, November 1954, pp. 24-25. Cited hereafter as Bulletin.



the Soviet system excellent, there is one facet which in military operations, can do much to negate even the best training and education. This facet is initiative, or the lack of initiative.

A brief and pointed analysis of the problem of initiative in the Soviet Army appeared in 1954. The writer, Captain N. Galaij, is a former officer in the White Army, a graduate of the Russian General Staff College Abroad, and from 1941 to 1945 he was a battalion commander in the Vlasov Army.

The ... weakness was very evident during the whole of the last war and is just as evident now. It is constraint in action and fear of taking the initiative and responsibility among commanders of intermediate echelons, that is, from battalion commanders to divisions commanders inclusive. These, of course, are the very men who are engaged in actual combat. The Soviet political system is rigidly centralized and punishes every failure. There is also a tendency for superior officers to lay the blame for failure on subordinates. This system cannot, of course, foster initiative, despite all the political declarations and regulations.<sup>42</sup>

The Soviet military leaders are aware of this organic problem, and undoubtedly are doing something to overcome it. In Military Thought, February, 1955, Marshal Rotmistrov wrote:

In future wars, in which the situation will doubt-

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42. Bulletin, October 1954, p. 15. The Vlasov Army was a Russian Army fighting for the Germans against Russia during World War II.

less be distinguished by its dynamic and sharp changes, it is very important that military commanders at all levels and ranks be able to take audacious and bold decisions... Great independence in the operation of troops will be required, without looking back on neighboring units.<sup>43</sup>

Latitude for the use of initiative is particularly necessary on the battlefield of today where the tactical atomic device prohibits the concentration of large masses of troops for anything but the briefest period of time. This necessarily requires dispersion of troops which leads to small formations lead by men who possess not only a sound knowledge of tactics and techniques, but the imagination, initiative, and aggressiveness to deal with situations and opportunities as they present themselves.

Although initiative, and this is applicable to the corporal as well as the general officer, is but one of a multitude of facets to consider when evaluating the Russian Army, it is a vital one and must be weighed.

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43. Raymond L. Garthoff, "Army in Being," Army, January, 1958, p. 56.



#### IV. SOVIET MILITARY LAW

Soviet military law and regulations, as they exist today, went into effect on 1 June 1946, with the promulgation of the Disciplinary Code of the Armed Forces of the USSR<sup>1</sup> and the Manual of Internal Service of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> The Disciplinary Code is comparable to the Uniform Code of Military Justice of the United States Armed Forces, and the Manual of Internal Service finds its counterpart in Army Regulations.

This chapter will deal with as much of the above mentioned Soviet publications as necessary to give the reader the atmosphere of Soviet military law in the relationships of the Soviet soldier and officer to his immediate military environment. The part played by the MVD in anti-state activities has been covered elsewhere in this paper.

The first seven Articles of the Disciplinary Code establish the obligations and responsibilities of the soldier and the commander.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Harold J. Berman and Miroslav Kerner (ed. and trans.), Documents on Soviet Military Law and Administration (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 50.

2. Ben L. Sanders, "Disciplinary Powers of Commanding Officers in the Soviet Army" (unpublished Master's thesis, School of Political Science, Columbia University, 1953), p. 37.

3. Berman, pp. 50-51.

Article 1. Military discipline is the strict and exact observance by all servicemen of the order and rules established by laws and military codes.

Article 2. Military discipline is founded on recognition by each serviceman of military duty and personal responsibility for the protection of his Motherland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Article 3. Military discipline obligates each serviceman:

To carry out exactly the requirements of military codes, orders, and instructions of commanders;  
Staunchly to bear all burdens and deprivations of military service, not to spare blood or life itself in fulfilling military duty;  
To guard strictly military and state secrets;  
To be honorable, truthful, and to study conscientiously the art of war and to safeguard in all ways military and national property;  
To show respect to commanders and seniors, and to observe strictly the rules of military courtesy and saluting.

Article 4. The interests of defending the Motherland require of a commander that he not leave without action a single offense of his subordinates, that he punish strictly the remiss and encourage the deserving for demonstrating zeal, exploits, and distinctions in service.

Article 5. Each commander is obliged resolutely and firmly to require observance of military discipline, constantly to educate his subordinates in the spirit of unflinching fulfillment of all its requirements, to develop and support in them a consciousness of military honor and military duty.

Article 6. The order of the commander shall be law for the subordinate. An order must be executed without reservation, exactly, and promptly.

Article 7. In cases of open disobedience or resistance of a subordinate, the commander is obliged to take all measures of compulsion, and in an extreme case, which does not permit delay, to use weapons; the commander shall report such an extraordinary case immediately through channels. A commander who does not take active measures for



the restoration of order and discipline shall bear responsibility for that. Each serviceman is obliged to cooperate with his commander in maintaining discipline and order.

Articles six and seven establish the command relationship in respect to the issuance and observance of orders. The Manual of Internal Service further establishes requirements in this field. Upon receiving an order the serviceman is required to reply "I will obey". If doubt exists that the subordinate understood the order the commander is to ask the subordinate to repeat the order briefly.<sup>4</sup>

Article three of the Disciplinary Code requires observance of the rules of saluting and military courtesy. Specific requirements on these topics are amplified in the Manual of Internal Service. All servicemen are required to render each other the salute with the subordinate and junior in rank acting first.<sup>5</sup> Privates salute not only officers but non-commissioned officers and privates first class of their own units. In addition the salute is rendered the flag of the Soviet Union and the flag of military units or ships when going aboard.<sup>6</sup> Outside formations, the command of attention is given by a senior who first sees the arrival of an officer or

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4. Manual of Internal Service, Article 18, cited in Sanders, p. 48.

5. Ibid., Article 20, p. 49.

6. Ibid., Article 21.

noncommissioned officer of higher rank than any of those present. The position of attention is maintained with the senior saluting until they are given "At ease" by the newly arrived senior.<sup>7</sup>

When the commander enters a staff meeting, attended by officers, generals, or admirals, the senior present calls "Comrade officers", or "Comrade generals", and all stand and render the hand salute. The commander, after accepting the report replies, "Comrade officers", and the business at hand commences.<sup>8</sup>

If one is addressed by a senior the senior is greeted by an expression wishing him good health. When departing from a senior and the senior says "Goodbye comrade", the subordinate may reply in the same manner, however if the word "comrade" is not affixed to the "goodbye" by the senior, the junior will affix the proper military title of the senior in his reply.<sup>9</sup> To speak to one several grades higher in rank, permission must be requested from one's immediate superior.<sup>10</sup> Smoking or sitting in the presence of a senior without permission is not permitted, and in a public conveyance a junior

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7. Ibid., Article 25, p. 50.

8. Ibid., Article 31.

9. Ibid., Article 22.

10. Ibid., Article 43, p. 51.



gives his seat to a senior if none are available.<sup>11</sup>

This brief examination of Soviet laws and regulations, clearly point out that the Russian soldier and officer lives in a highly stratified society, with the obligations to the state, seniors and subordinates carefully spelled out.

Violations of laws and regulations requires punishment and the machinery to administer the punishments. The first step is a determination of what to do with the accused.

For a violation of military discipline or of the general order a serviceman must be subjected to disciplinary penalty if the offense committed by him does not involve being arraigned in court.<sup>12</sup>

V. M. Chikvadze, in his book on Soviet criminal law, attempts to establish guidance for commanders in making their decision. He established the demarkation line between military crimes and misdemeanors at - "Was the offense of the type that involves social danger, was it harmful or injurious to the army or the state?"<sup>13</sup> If it was a misdemeanor the commander adjudges sentence within established guidelines. Those offenses which will be classified as misdemeanors are failure to salute, violations of uniform regulations, vio-

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11. Ibid., Article 45.

12. Disciplinary Code, Article 18, cited in Berman, p. 53.

13. V. M. Chikvadze, Sovetskoi Voennoe - Vgolovoe Pravo, (Iyuridicheskoe Izdatelstvo, Moskva, 1948), p. 188. Cited in Sanders, p. 58.

lations of barracks routine, and other minor omissions. Those cases referred to trial will be desertion, espionage, disrespect to seniors, and other more serious acts.

All military forces have programs wherein incentives are offered to induce men to continue their military service at the expiration of an enlistment or a required term of service. In the Soviet Army one of the inducements is found in the limitations imposed upon commanders when adjudging sentence upon an offender, in that the "extraterm" sergeants and master sergeants are subject to less severe punishments at the hands of their commanders<sup>14</sup> and are confined separately from the "regularterm" enlisted men.<sup>15</sup>

Arrest in the Soviet Army is of many varieties. Under simple arrest enlisted men are kept in common cells and sleep on bare plank boards. They are given bread, salt, water, a tea allowance, and hot food is issued to them every day. When under strict arrest each man is kept in a separate cell, bare planks are slept on, bread, salt, water, and tea is issued each day, and hot food every other day.<sup>16</sup> Officers arrested with confinement in the guardhouse are separated from enlisted

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14. Disciplinary Code, Appendix IV, Article 9, cited in Berman, p. 82.

15. Disciplinary Code, Article 25, cited in Berman, p. 55.

16. Disciplinary Code, Appendix IV, Article 8, cited in Berman, p. 82.



men, and senior officers are segregated from junior officers. Arrested officers are issued bedding at the time set for sleeping.<sup>17</sup> An officer under arrest in quarters is notified of his status by his immediate superior and of the duration of time of the arrest. He is not relieved of his side arms.<sup>18</sup> While under arrest in quarters the officer is on duty with his unit from reveille until retreat. When arriving for duty and going to quarters, the arrested person must present himself to the officer of the day. An officer in this status is forbidden to attend meetings or visit the social places of the unit. After retreat and until reveille the arrested person shall not have the right to leave his quarters or receive visitors.<sup>19</sup>

The following table of punishment is applicable to all enlisted men with the exception of sergeants and master sergeants of the extraterm service. These sergeants may receive only:

1. Reprimand
2. Simple confinement up to twenty days
3. Demotion in command
4. Transfer to the reserve for the remainder of the term of the service<sup>20</sup>

The maximum punishment that can be given by a commander to an enlisted man is found under those which can be given by a divi-

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17. Ibid., Article 10, p. 83.

18. Ibid., Article 13.

19. Ibid., Article 15.

20. Disciplinary Code, Article 25, cited in Berman, p.

sion commander. The maximum punishment that can be given an officer by a commander is found under those which can be given by an army commander.

TABLE OF PUNISHMENTS APPLICABLE TO ENLISTED MEN<sup>21</sup>

Duty position of Commander	Reprimand	Restriction	Work Details	Simple Arrest	Strict Arrest
Squad Commander	Yes	Pvt-1 Day	1	No	No
Assistant Platoon Commander	Yes	Pvt-2 Days Sgt-1 Day	2 1	No No	No No
Company First Sergeant	Yes	Pvt-3 Days Sgt-2 Days	3 1	2 Days No	No No
Platoon Commander	Yes	Pvt-3 Days Sgt-2 Days	4 2	3 Days 1 Day	No No
Company Commander	Yes	Pvt-1 Month Sgt-3 Days	5 3	10 Days 5 Days	4 Days 2 Days
Battalion Commander	Yes	Pvt-1 Month Sgt-1 Month	5 3	15 Days 10 Days	7 Days 5 Days
Regimental Commander (a) (b)	Yes	Pvt-1 Month Sgt-1 Month	5 3	20 Days 20 Days	15 Days 10 Days
Division Commander (c) (d) (e)	Yes	Pvt-1 Month Sgt-1 Month	5 3	20 Days 20 Days	15 Days 10 Days

- (a) To deprive the rank of private first class
- (b) To reduce in official duties sergeants and master sergeants
- (c) All the rights assigned to a regimental commander
- (d) To reduce sergeants and master sergeants in regular-term service to the rank of private
- (e) To retire to the reserves sergeants and master sergeants in extra-term service for the remainder of the term of service.

21. Ibid., Articles 26 through 33, pp. 55-56-57.



# TABLE OF PUNISHMENTS APPLICABLE TO OFFICERS<sup>22</sup>

Duty position of Commander	Admonish and Reprimand	House Arrest	Arrest with Confinement	Warn of inadequate discharge of duties
Company Commander	Orally	2 Days	2 Days	No
Battalion Commander	Orally before group of officers	Jr. Off.- 5 Days	5 Days	Yes
Regimental Commander	Orally before group of officers or in order of the day	Jr. Off.-10 Days Sr. Off.- 5 Days	10 Days 5 Days	Yes Yes
Division Commander	Written, oral, before group of officers, or in order of the day	Jr. Off.-15 Days Sr. Off.-10 Days	15 Days 10 Days	Yes Yes
Corps Commander	Written, oral, before group of officers, or in order of the day	Jr. Off.-20 Days Sr. Off.-15 Days	20 Days 15 Days	Yes Yes
Army Commander	Written, oral, before group of officers, or in order of the day	Jr. Off.-20 Days Sr. Off.-20 Days	20 Days 20 Days	Yes Yes
Army Group Commander	Same as Army Commander, plus, to assign with a reduction in official duties battalion commanders, those corresponding to them and lower.			

The disciplining of general officers begins with the Corps Commander, who can admonish and reprimand orally, in writing, or in the order of the day.<sup>23</sup> Army and Army Group Commanders, in addition to the above can warn a general

22. Ibid., Articles 41 through 47, pp. 59-60.

23. Ibid., Article 45, p. 60.

officer of inadequate discharge of duty.<sup>24</sup>

Speedy justice is insured by a provision that:

Every disciplinary penalty must be imposed within five days from the day when the offense committed became known to the commander, and if an investigation or inquiry is conducted, then from the day of its completion.<sup>25</sup>

When reviewing a disciplinary case a senior shall not have the right to reverse or decrease a sentence by a junior commander, by reason of the severity of the penalty, as long as the latter has not exceeded his authority. However a senior commander does have the right to increase a penalty if he finds that the sentence does not correspond to the seriousness of the offense committed.<sup>26</sup> Although a sentence is appealed it is still carried out until it is reversed.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to prescribing punishments, the Disciplinary Code also prescribes rewards for meritorious service as follows:

Article 73. The following rewards shall be applied to privates, sergeants, and master sergeants:

(a) Expression of appreciation in formation or in the order of the day;

(b) Removal of a disciplinary penalty previously imposed;

(c) Award to privates, sergeants, and master sergeants in regular-term service of a pass from the area of the unit or from the ship, up to two days;

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24. Ibid., Articles 46, 47, pp. 60-61.

25. Ibid., Article 67, p. 64.

26. Ibid., Article 66.

27. Ibid., Article 70, p. 65.



(d) Award to privates, sergeants, and master sergeants in regular-term service of a short-term leave, up to ten days, not counting travel time to the place of leave and back;

(e) Award of testimonials of merit on completion of the course of study in training units and subdivisions and on return to the reserves;

(f) Award of valuable gifts or money;

(g) Award of personal photograph of the serviceman, taken before the unfurled banner of the unit;

(h) Notification to the home town or place of former employment of the serviceman of his exemplary performance of service duties and of rewards received;

(i) Award of military decoration.<sup>28</sup>

Article 81. The following rewards shall be applicable to officers, generals, and admirals;

(a) Expression of appreciation orally, before an assembly of officers, or in the order of the day;

(b) Removal of a disciplinary penalty previously imposed;

(c) Award of valuable engraved gifts or money;

(d) Nomination for premature advancement to the next military rank;

(e) Award of an engraved blank and operating firearm;

(f) Transfer to guard unit commands.<sup>29</sup>

The Disciplinary Code makes provisions for the Soviet Servicemen to lodge complaints, oral, or written and signed,<sup>30</sup> for themselves only.<sup>31</sup> They are warned against making false complaints,<sup>32</sup> and are forbidden to complain of the severity of

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28. Ibid., pp. 65-66.

29. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

30. Ibid., Article 98, p. 71.

31. Ibid., Article 101.

32. Ibid., Article 108, p. 72.

a disciplinary penalty if the commander has not exceeded his authority.<sup>33</sup>

Because of the unique position of the officer class in Soviet society, there has developed within the officer ranks a pseudo-legal procedure known as Officers' Courts of Honor. These courts are given official recognition by the Disciplinary Code.

Courts of honor shall be established for the guarding of the dignity and honor of the rank of officer. To them shall be entrusted the trial of offenses which are unworthy of the rank of officer, or degrading to military honor or incompatible with the concept of morality.<sup>34</sup>

The commander who has jurisdiction over the court shall decide whether or not a case is subject to trial by a court of honor.<sup>35</sup> Cases involving junior officers are tried in the regiment, those involving senior officers are tried at division, except regimental commander<sup>36</sup> who will be tried in a court convened at a military district headquarters or Army Group headquarters.<sup>37</sup>

Courts of honor consist of five officers, all of whom have served in the unit for not less than one year before their

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33. Ibid., Article 102, p. 71.

34. Ibid., Article 114, p. 73.

35. Ibid., Article 115, p. 73.

36. Ibid., Article 116.

37. Ibid., Article 118, p. 74.



election to the court. At least one senior officer must be elected to the court when a junior officer is being tried, and only senior officers serve when trying senior officers.<sup>38</sup> The members of the court elect from among their number a president and his deputy.<sup>39</sup>

A trial by a court of honor is usually held in open session, however officers of a rank below that of the accused are not permitted to attend.<sup>40</sup> If for no valid reason the accused fails to attend the trial the court renders a verdict by default.<sup>41</sup> In the trial all evidence is presented, and the accused is permitted to testify and present his own evidence.<sup>42</sup> The court of honor may decide:

1. To acquit the accused;
2. To admonish him;
3. To reprimand him;
4. To reprimand him severely;
5. To petition for postponement of his regular promotion to the next military rank;
6. To petition for his reduction in official duties or military rank;
7. To petition for his transfer to another military district...;
8. To petition for his retirement into the reserves.<sup>43</sup>

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38. Ibid., Article 122, p. 75.

39. Ibid., Article 127.

40. Ibid., Article 133, p. 76.

41. Ibid., Article 135, p. 77.

42. Ibid., Article 134.

43. Ibid., Article 139.

The only appeal which can be made from a court of honor is for violation of the procedure established for courts of honor. The appeal must be made within three days after announcement of the verdict, and it is made to the commander who has jurisdiction over the court.<sup>44</sup>

To round out our picture of military law in the Soviet Army we will briefly examine the punishments given to the more common military crimes.

For failure to carry out an order one can be sentenced to loss of freedom up to five years, except in time of war five years shall be the minimum sentence,<sup>45</sup> and in combat the penalty will be death by shooting with total confiscation of property.<sup>46</sup>

First offense of an absence up to two hours shall be subject to disciplinary punishment; after the first offense, or in cases involving an absence of over two hours the case will be tried by military tribunal, with sentence to a disciplinary battalion for a period from two months to two years. In wartime the sentence shall be from three to five years.<sup>47</sup> Any absence over twenty-four hours is desertion, punishable by loss

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44. Ibid., Article 141, p. 78.

45. RSFSR Criminal Code, 1952 ed., Article 193 (2), cited in Berman, p. 85. Cited hereafter as Criminal Code.

46. 20 October, 1934, Coll. Laws RSFSR, No. 39, Article 237, Cited in Berman, p. 86.

47. Criminal Code, Article 193 (7), cited in Berman, p. 87.



of freedom from five to ten years, and in wartime by death by shooting with confiscation of property.<sup>48</sup> Mitigating circumstances may lessen the specified punishments, as may rank and the extraterm status of an enlisted man.

Violation of guard regulations by a sentry can be punished by loss of freedom up to six months. If the sentry is standing watch over an arms depot, ammunition, explosives, or anything else of special state or military significance the sentence can be loss of freedom up to three years. If the violation of guard regulations permits that which the sentry was posted to prevent, the punishment will be loss of freedom for not less than one year.<sup>49</sup> If these acts of neglect are committed in wartime the loss of freedom shall be for not less than three years, and if aggravating circumstances are present the sentence can include death.<sup>50</sup>

This brief examination of Soviet military law has shown us a disciplinary code that is much stricter than American standards, and one which extends disciplinary powers much further down the chain of command than in American military units. Theoretically this should permit a very tight disci-

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48. Edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 6 July, 1940, cited in Berman, p. 87.

49. Criminal Code, Article 193 (15), cited in Berman, p. 91.

50. 15 January 1931, Coll. Laws RSFSR, No. 5, Article 47, cited in Berman, p. 91.

pline and control over Soviet military units. As in the case of all law and regulation enforcement, the degree of enforcement depends upon the zeal and attitudes of the unit commander and the zampolit.



## V. THE OFFICER CORPS

The officer corps of the Soviet Army exists as a privileged class in the Soviet Union. It is more of a caste than the officer corps of any other major army.<sup>1</sup> This exalted position has not always been enjoyed by the Soviet officer. Paragraph 7, Order No. 1, 14 March, 1917, issued by the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers Deputies to the Petrograd garrison and to all members of the armed forces informed them that they could abolish the use of terms of respect towards officers.<sup>2</sup> On 29 December, 1917, after the fall of the Provisional Government, a decree was issued abolishing all ranks, declaring that all were "Equal-to-one-another". This decree also abolished marks of distinction.<sup>3</sup>

The Soviet commander retained his anonymity until 1935 when the rank of Marshal was introduced. During the reorganization of the army after the Finnish operations, in 1940, other ranks were reintroduced, as was the salute. In 1942 the

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1. Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine (Glen-coe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 220.

2. Meisal and Kozera, Materials for the Study of the Soviet System (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950), p. 2, cited in Ben L. Sanders, "Disciplinary Powers of Commanding Officers in the Soviet Army" (unpublished Master's Thesis, School of Political Science, Columbia University, 1953), p. 14.

3. Meisal and Kozera, p. 37, cited in Sanders, p. 14.

epaulettes reappeared.<sup>4</sup> The position and prestige of the officer had been reestablished in the Red Army.

There are three avenues to a commission in the Soviet Army. A properly qualified civilian may make application, as may also a graduate of a Suvorov (military preparatory) school, and an enlisted soldier. The qualifications are excellent physical condition, absolute political reliability,<sup>5</sup> and educational requirements ranging from seven years schooling for an infantry commission to ten years for a commission in other branches of the army. An enlisted soldier must be recommended by his commanding officer, make application to the officers candidate school, and if accepted by the school he may then take the necessary examinations. No small factor in selection is family background and affiliation with the communist party.<sup>6</sup> Because the rewards for successfully competing and receiving a commission are so great in the Soviet scheme of things, the applicants for the billets are abundant, the selectivity is very high, with the officer candidate schools graduating some 10,000 new officers per year since World War II.<sup>7</sup> The train-

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4. Garthoff, pp. 219-220.

5. U. S. Department of the Army, Handbook on the Soviet and Satellite Armies, Part I, The Soviet Army. Pamphlet No. 30-50-1, March, 1953, p. 76.

6. U. S. Department of State, The Soviet Union as Reported by Former Soviet Citizens, Interview Report No. 7, 4 June 1953, p. 9. Cited hereafter as Report.

7. Colonel Louis B. Ely, "The Officer Corps", The Red Army ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), p. 400.



ing program of the officer candidate schools are covered in Chapter Three.

Party control of officer promotions is reflected in that more attention is given to a candidate's political reliability than to his professional competence. High rank in the military is very likely to correspond to high Party rank. Over 80%, 48 to 50, of the military men in the Supreme Soviet hold key positions in the Army. Approximately 50% of this group are members or candidates to the Party's Central Committee.<sup>8</sup> Once each year an efficiency report is submitted on every officer by his immediate superior. In addition to the commanding officer, the zampolit, and the next two higher commanding officers have access to this report. Up to 1946 or 1947 the officer concerned was permitted to see this report, but this is now prohibited.<sup>9</sup>

The basic pay of an officer is made up of two parts. He first draws a specified sum of money because of his rank, and he then is paid another sum for the billet he is filling. A Second Lieutenant, by virtue of his rank draws 400 rubles per month, if he is commanding an infantry platoon he draws an additional 700 rubles, giving him a total base pay of 1,100 rubles. However, if this same lieutenant is commanding an in-

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8. Anonymous, "The Red Army High Command," Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR, May, 1954, p. 27. Cited hereafter as Bulletin.

9. Report, No. 15, October 1955, pp. 6-7.

infantry company his billet pay is 900 rubles, in which case he would draw 1,300 rubles per month. Rank and billet pay scales are as follows:<sup>10</sup>

OFFICERS PAY BY RANK  
(In rubles monthly)

Second Lieutenant.....	400	Lieutenant Colonel...	1,100
First Lieutenant.....	500	Colonel.....	1,300
Senior First Lieutenant...	600	Brigadier General....	1,700
Captain.....	700	Major General.....	2,000
Major.....	900		

OFFICERS PAY BY BILLET  
(In rubles monthly)

	Regular Commanders	Tank Corps Commanders
Platoon Commanders .....	700	800
Company Commanders .....	900	1,150
Battalion Commanders .....	1,300	1,450
Regimental Commanders .....	1,800	2,000
Division Commanders .....	2,500	2,800

Air Force  
Commanders

Pilot .....	900
Flight Commander.....	1,200
Squadron Commander.....	1,700
Regimental Commander.....	2,300
Division Commander.....	3,000

Pay for staff billets, executive officers, and assistants is computed by interpolation; for example the billet pay of an infantry company executive officer (second in command) is 800 rubles, this is determined by his position as

10. M. Martens, "Providing for the Soviet Officer," Bulletin February 1956, pp. 26-27.



senior to the platoon commanders, but junior to the company commander. The seemingly discrepancy in the billet pay of the various regimental and division commanders by branch is somewhat alleviated by the fact that promotions to commands in the Tank Corps and the Air Force are faster, therefore the officers in these two branches receive less length of service pay, very closely equalizing the gross pay of the various commanders.<sup>11</sup>

Pay in addition to rank and billet comes from many sources. Upon being commissioned an officer receives twice the monthly pay of a platoon commander, 1,400 to 1,800 rubles, depending upon his branch, this is known as "resettlement and travel money". After reporting to a new unit an officer is given paid leave to arrange for quarters and to bring his family. In accomplishing this he has the right to the free use of state transportation to move his possessions.<sup>12</sup>

An allowance for length of service is paid Soviet officers, this amounts to approximately 5% for five years service, 10% for ten years service, 15% for fifteen years service, and 20% for twenty years and more service. Graduates from military academies receive an additional 10%. Separation from family and remoteness from regular lines

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11. Ibid., p. 27.

12. Ibid., p. 26.

of communication and inhabited areas (approximately sixty five miles), will qualify an officer for additional pay, not to exceed 15%. An additional 3% allowance can be accrued by being stationed in an area designated "malarial", and another 3% for being stationed in a place over 6,500 feet above sea level.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to his pay the Soviet officer receives his uniforms and other clothing at state expense. His uniform is either ready-made or he is given the materials and the tailoring and bootmaking is done by shops supported by Voentorg, a military trading system to provide consumer goods for officers and their families, at no expense to the officer. His personal weapons are also supplied free of charge.<sup>14</sup>

The housing problems of the Soviet officers bear a familiar ring, although his American counterpart is much better off. There is a shortage of housing, and the living conditions vary widely in different garrisons and part of the country. Because of their position, the Soviet officers are in better condition than the civilian population. An officer has the right to live in a private apartment, but local conditions may make this impossible, however where they are available the officer gets one at a reduced rate. Quarters are available at certain posts, these will include schools,

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13. Ibid., p. 28.

14. Ibid.



clinics, clubs, theatres, and exchanges. Furniture in these quarters is usually of poor quality. Unmarried officers live several to one room.<sup>15</sup>

Soviet officers receive thirty-six days paid annual leave. If leave is cancelled an officer receives thirty-six days additional pay. The thirty-six days leave excludes travel time. Special fares are available to officers on leave, on a Soviet airline an officer pays 25% of the normal fare.<sup>16</sup>

Voentorg is the largest trading organization within the Soviet Union, with trading points wherever there are military units. It has its own restaurants and stores, and regardless of the situation within the country this organization always has goods, even those in shortest supply. Its goods are priced below similar goods in civilian stores. Officers usually eat in messes and restaurants maintained by Voentorg in the cities, military units and camps. Meals are provided officers free during wartime, maneuvers and field training. On maneuvers, however, Voentorg sets up mobile canteens where officers and men can buy tobacco, cigarettes, snacks, and soft drinks.<sup>17</sup>

Officers of the Air Force, Submarine Service, and Diving Service receive their breakfast at their units free. Because

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15. Ibid., p. 29.

16. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

17. Ibid., p. 30.

of the critical nature of their work they are required to eat breakfast, and failure to do so, without a medical certificate, is a punishable offense.<sup>18</sup>

Officers on special duty also receive extra pay. Those flyers who served in Spain during the Civil War received four times their regular pay. There is little doubt that Soviet officers who saw service in Korea during the 1950-1953 operations also received extra pay.<sup>19</sup>

Until 1947, various privileges and additional pay accompanied medals awarded for heroism and outstanding performance of duty. Although medals no longer carry these privileges they are compensated for by a new feature, namely, crediting the recipient with one third more time than actually served. An officer with a decoration who has served fifteen years is given credit for twenty years service.<sup>20</sup>

Deductions from an officers pay are for food eaten with his unit unless he is on maneuvers, field training, or in time of war; Communist Party membership dues, deductions for state loans which amount to 12% of pay due, and voluntary contributions to a mutual insurance fund which exists in most units.<sup>21</sup>

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18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., p. 31.

21. Ibid., p. 28.



Since February 1951 officers pay an income tax of 8% on income up to 1,000 rubles per month, with higher rates for greater incomes. There is an additional 6% tax for officers without children.<sup>22</sup>

Officers and their families are given social insurance covering officers' pensions, pensions for members of the family if the officer dies or is reported missing, separation pay, and free medical care. Pensions are paid upon disability or normal retirement. Those totally disabled are given 100% of their former pay, those who cannot work but do not require care are given 75%, and those who cannot do regular work but can obtain temporary and light work are given 50%. Pensions are increased by 25% for combat disability of all types. A pension for twenty years service amounts to 50% of pay, each successive year of service increases the pension by 4% until twenty five years service when each year is compensated for by 6%. Thirty years or more service provides for a pension of 100% pay. In calculating pension service, actual service time, leave time, sick time, time spent in military academies, and time spent in the Red Guard is all counted. One month in the Red Guard counts for four months, flying personnel in the Air Force two months, submarine, minesweeper, and diving crews for one and one half months, service at the Soviet borders and in the Border

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22. Report, No. 19. September 1957, p. 12.

Guards as one and one half months, and wartime service counts as two months.<sup>23</sup>

Families of deceased pensioners are paid 50% of the pay of the deceased if there is one beneficiary, 75% if there are two, and 100% if there are three or more.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the above there are also "personal pensions", awarded at the recommendation of the war minister by the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR. This type compensation is usually awarded to marshals, generals, Heroes of the Soviet Union, and professors of military academies. These pensions are specifically awarded for "Exceptional Service to the USSR".<sup>25</sup>

Soviet officers are not free to marry whomever they wish. The prospective brides are required to have a secondary school education, and must be approved by a family collective composed of the officers of the unit. The commanding officer must also approve the marriage. The bridegroom must have a savings of 3,000 rubles in the case of lieutenants and 5,000 rubles for captains and higher ranking officers.<sup>26</sup>

A field officer, major, lieutenant colonel, or colonel is assigned a soldier as a servant, and higher officers, generals

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23. Bulletin, February, 1956, pp. 31-32.

24. Ibid., p. 32.

25. Ibid.

26. Ely, p. 398.



and marshals, have a staff of soldiers for their household.<sup>27</sup>

The Soviet Army is treated with respect by the Soviet press. During World War II when the traditions of the Tsarist Army were grafted to the Red Army the old heroes, most notably Suvorov and Kutuzov, were placed in the national legend just below Lenin. The golden epaulets and colorful dress uniforms of the Soviet officers reflect the Imperial traditions.<sup>28</sup>

The Soviet officer lives a fairly comfortable life, and is very well rewarded when compared with his civilian counterpart. This is recognized by the civilian population and is reflected in a certain amount of hostility towards the officer class.<sup>29</sup>

The young ambitious Soviet officer who is willing to work, study, and play his politics correctly can carve a nice career for himself in the Soviet Army.

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27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Report, No. 15, October, 1955, p. 5.

## VI. THE ENLISTED SOLDIER

We have seen elsewhere that the Soviet soldier enters the service in the fall of the year and initially undergoes an eight week indoctrination training. During this period the men are screened and tested for future assignment. These assignments are based on educational qualifications, civilian skills, political reliability and certain physical characteristics according to the requirements of the service. In the army, the higher type conscripts go to the technical arms and services. Natural skills and background of certain ethnic or national groups are exploited in their branch assignments. Cossacks may very likely end up in the cavalry, Siberians in the ski troops, and Caucasians in the mountain units.<sup>1</sup>

After the indoctrination period the soldier joins his new unit. The daily routine that greets the new soldier is one designed to keep him so occupied that he will have no time to get into trouble, additionally it is one that utilizes almost every minute of the time between reveille and taps to improve the soldier professionally and politically. A typical daily routine for a unit in the Soviet

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1. "Military Service and Training," The Soviet Military Organization (New York: Armed Forces Information School, Fort Slocum, 1951), p. 41. Cited hereafter as Organization.



Army is as follows:

- 0600-0630. Washing, dressing, making of bunks. The bunks are double-tiered and of metal. The bedding consists of a straw palliasse, a straw pillow, a yellowish cotton sheet, and grey army blanket...
- 0630-0700. Morning inspection conducted by the section commanders...
- 0700-0730. Breakfast, consisting of 200 gm. of black bread,  $3/4$  litre of soup, or a bowl of millet gruel (sometimes buckwheat porridge) and 12 gm. of sugar for tea.
- 0730-1300. Training, with, immediately after breakfast, half an hour of political instruction, followed by five hours of drill.
- 1300-1400. Dinner, consisting of borsch, meat with porridge or mashed potatoes, stewed fruit, and 300 gm. of black bread...
- 1400-1800. Instruction, both political and on the square...
- 1800-1900. Cleaning weapons and study of Army regulations.
- 1900-2000. Supper, consisting of gruel with meat sauce, with, again, 300 gm. of black bread; the lower ranks are issued white bread only four times a year, on holidays. Twice a year, on 1st May and 7th November (October Revolution Day), the men get 100 gm. of vodka with their dinner.
- 2000-2100, is 'personal time', which is spent mending clothes, writing letters, or visiting the Army Trade Store.... Sometimes a soldier, if he is backward, is deprived of his 'personal hour' and his squad commander provides him with additional instruction, ...if a man belongs to a 'National Minority', in the Russian language.

2100-2200. Evening roll-call and 'Lights-Out'.<sup>2</sup>

Even Sunday is dominated by the Army and the Party. A former Soviet lieutenant, a defector to the west while stationed in Germany, gives us a normal Sunday routine, Reveille is at 0700 with breakfast to 0900. At 1000 the troops are formed up for an athletic event, a cross-country race with equipment may be on the schedule. From 1200 to 1400 is more physical culture activities. This is followed by a lecture on current events or a political topic, with dinner at 1500. After dinner a movie will be shown, but the lieutenant says most men are so tired they will sleep. Supper is at 2000, with lights out at 2200.<sup>3</sup>

A former lieutenant colonel, when commenting on this almost complete demand on the time of the soldier, said that the men do not even have time to be bored, and if an occasional soldier shown signs of boredom, "necessary action" will be taken. He further stated that it was useless for soldiers to attempt to offer resistance or opposition to all this regimentation.<sup>4</sup>

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2. Mikhail Koriakov, "Military Atmosphere," The Red Army, ed. B. H. Liddell Hart (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), pp. 413-14-15.

3. U. S. Department of State, The Soviet Union as Reported by Former Soviet Citizens, Interview Report No. 19, September, 1957, p. 10. Cited hereafter as Report.

4. Report, No. 15, October, 1955, p. 5.



Leave, in the Soviet Army, is unknown to the enlisted men in the rank of sergeant and below. Even in the event of the death of one of the parents the men are usually not given permission to go home to attend the funeral.<sup>5</sup> How much leave the senior noncommissioned officers obtain I was unable to discover. A former Major, who began his career as a Private, states that one explanation for this policy is that if the enlisted men saw the conditions under which their parents and friends were living at home it would greatly effect their morale.<sup>6</sup>

The Soviet private works for practically nothing, and the pay of the other enlisted men in the Soviet Army is but one step removed from "practically nothing". The pay of a Soviet private is thirty rubles, and it increases by rank to three hundred rubles per month for a Master Sergeant.<sup>7</sup> Doctor Garthoff rates the pay of the Soviet private equivalent to \$6.00.<sup>8</sup>

The Soviet equivalent to the American Post Exchange (PX), is the Army Trade Store. These stores are attached to every unit and a soldier may buy extra food, and necessary toilet articles.<sup>9</sup>

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5. Report, No. 1, August, 1951, p. 9.

6. Ibid.

7. Report, No. 9, 1955, p. 7.

8. Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 220.

9. Koriakov, p. 415.

With its large annual draft influx, the army does not usually permit personnel in the lower enlisted ranks to remain in the army. A certain percentage of sergeants are permitted to remain, and in the case of specially desired and qualified noncommissioned officers, considerable political pressure can be placed on them by the zampolit, particularly if they are members of the Party, to get them to remain in the army.<sup>10</sup> A former Soviet Captain estimated that 40% to 50% of the career noncommissioned officers were Ukrainians or Byelorussians.<sup>11</sup>

In World War II the Soviet soldier acquired a reputation for his ability to move over difficult terrain, live off the land, and move forward in the face of heavy fire and staggering losses. This is mobility. The Soviet soldier has shown no signs of losing this mobility. He is still unburdened by luxury items and carrying minimum rations.<sup>12</sup>

The Soviet infantryman in his loose fitting field uniform, carries those items of equipment common to all infantrymen, regardless of the flag he is serving under; rifle or submachine gun, grenades, entrenching tool, canteen, mess kit and cup, rations, rain cape, tobacco, and toilet articles. To this may be added an overcoat, which is normally slung in

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10. Report, No. 15, October, 1955, p. 5.

11. Ibid., No. 9, 1955, p. 22.

12. "Mobility of the Soviet Soldier", Organization, p. 50.



a horseshoe roll over the shoulder, and a few items of extra clothing. The rucksack is part of the soldier's winter equipment. Abandonment of equipment on the battlefield is not a characteristic of the Soviet soldier, rather he will scavenge bits of equipment to supplement his own meager supply.<sup>13</sup>

As the recruit enters his new unit in November of each year, the release to the reserve of those who have completed their service, takes place simultaneously. The Soviet government has been known to take steps in an effort to work these men into the national economy. This was true in 1954 when the government had an extensive campaign to induce discharged soldiers to develop new farming lands and improve agriculture. It is estimated that from 2% to 3% of those released cooperated with the government's program.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the annual release, servicemen may be discharged for the convenience of the government. Disabled soldiers are eligible for pensions, the degree of disability determining the amount. A total disability brings a pension equivalent to the soldier's last civilian wage. In the event of his death in the service his family will receive a lesser

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13. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

14. "Demobilization of Soviet Troops", Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR, November, 1954, p. 22.

amount.<sup>15</sup>

After twenty-five years service a soldier may retire on 50% of his base pay. He receives an additional 3% for each year of service beyond twenty-five. Additional service credits are recieved for service in the 1917 Revolution and Civil War and submarine and other hazardous duty branches.<sup>16</sup>

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15. "Military Service and Training," Organization, p. 42.

16. Ibid., pp. 42-43.



## VII. SUMMARY

The Soviet soldier of 1959 is a product of the study and evaluation of the Russo-German operations of World War II. After the disastrous start of these operations the Soviet high command was quick to take remedial action, make revolutionary changes, and emerged victorious from the war. The Soviet Army of today has but few traces of the Red Army of 1940.

The Soviet soldier of today lives in an environment of severe discipline, fear, and with the knowledge that his personal life means little to his leaders.

The Disciplinary Code and the Manual of Internal Service, which became effective in June 1946, gave the army its present disciplinary complexion. The enlisted soldier can be disciplined by persons four echelons below the level of his American counterpart. The Company Commander in the American Army is the lowest echelon where an enlisted man can be punished for infractions of regulations. The Russian private can be disciplined by his Squad Leader, Assistant Platoon Commander, Company First Sergeant, or Platoon Commander without the incident being brought to the attention of his Company Commander.

A brief comparison of punishments which can be adjudged by Soviet and American Courts-Martial show that in the Soviet Army for a period of unauthorized absence in excess of two hours, but less than twenty-four hours, the sentence shall be

assignment to a disciplinary battalion for a period from two months to two years. For a like absence in the American Army the maximum punishment shall be confinement at hard labor for one month and forfeiture of two-thirds pay for one month. This absence during wartime in the Soviet Army will bring a sentence from three to five years, no distinction as to peace or wartime is made in the American Uniform Code of Military Justice. Absence in excess of twenty-four hours in the Soviet Army is desertion, in the United States Marine Corps a man is administratively declared a deserter after an absence of thirty days. Legal proof of desertion involves proving "intent", a discussion of which could well be the topic for another thesis.

Although the zampolit is subordinate to the unit commander, his very presence, the presence of the Secret Police, and the internal spy system of informers and counter-informers, gives the Soviet soldier an atmosphere of fear and distrust. I would rate fear as one of the primary motivators in the military career of the enlisted man, whereas material reward and fear in addition to dedication are the motivation of the officer corps.

The high command attitude toward the enlisted man is reflected by the remarks of Marshal Zhukov to General Eisenhower in August 1945.

... When we come to a mine field our infantry attacks exactly as if it were not there. The loss we get from personnel mines we consider

only equal to those we would have gotten from machine guns and artillery if the Germans had chosen to defend that particular area with strong bodies of troops instead of with mine fields.<sup>1</sup>

To raise the professional standards of the army an excellent system of schools was established during the war, and expanded after it. The authority and prestige of the officer and non-commissioned officer have been restored, and in the case of the officer to a degree not found in a western army. This is reflected in the officer's many privileges of rank, high pay, and courts of honor. The officers constitute a distinct class in Soviet society. It is the writer's opinion that the changes instituted since 1946, are for the most part, for the better, and will give the Soviets, in these areas, a better army than the one with which they were victorious in World War II.

The progress just cited, brings the Soviet Army up to a par with its western counterparts in many respects, and it is quite possible that it has certain advantages over western armies in one or two phases. On the other hand, it contains serious drawbacks, the area of initiative, as discussed in Chapter Three, may be cited as one very serious liability.

The Soviet soldier is a very hardy, rugged individual. His physical condition, stamina, and ability to live off the

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1. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, (Garden City, New York: Permabooks, 1952), p. 514.



land are well known from tales of his exploits during World War II. He is still unspoiled by the luxuries of western civilization. His love for "Mother Russia" is still as strong as ever and his willingness to die for her was demonstrated against the Germans. In evaluating the Russian soldier it must be remembered that he knows no other life than that which he has led, observed, and read about. He has never seen the west, all he knows about it is what the Party has permitted him to know. It is true that during World War II certain Russian units were driven into battle at gunpoint, and that initially hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers deserted to the Germans, but it is also true that after years of captivity, Russian prisoners, upon being liberated by the Soviet Army, took up weapons on the spot, and joined in the pursuit of the fleeing Germans.<sup>2</sup> This is not the action of a half-hearted soldier. The Russian defenses at Moscow, Leningrad, and Stalingrad speak well of the determination of the Russian soldier.

Russia has been called the largest prison camp in the world. If this is true, the enlisted men in the Soviet Army are then living in the solitary confinement block of this

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2. Interview with Richard H. Fague, 16 September, 1958. Mr. Fague, an American soldier, was liberated from a German Prisoner of War Camp by the Russians on 28 April, 1945. He spent approximately five weeks with the Soviet army before being turned over to British military authorities. Of the 20,000 Russian liberated with Mr. Fague, he estimated that approximately 75% immediately joined the battle against the Germans, notwithstanding the fact that some Russians had been in German hands since the initial days of the conflict, June 1940.

prison.

The paradox, between environment and product, is difficult to understand, but the fact cannot be denied that the Soviet soldier is a formidable opponent, one to be respected but not feared.

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